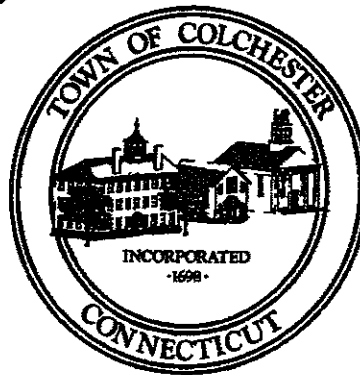


Gregg Schuster



First Selectman

## MEMORANDUM

To: Labor and Public Employees Committee

Cc: Sen. Eileen Daily  
Rep. Linda Orange  
Colchester Board of Selectmen

From : Gregg Schuster, First Selectman *GS*

Date: 2/17/10

Re: HB 5059 - Municipal Assessor Appointments

Please accept this written testimony as my opposition to this bill in its current form. I fully understand the need to ensure public employees are treated fairly and with due process. Additionally, I agree that there must be adequate cause for removal of any public employee.

However, I believe that those decisions are best left in the hands of the municipalities. In Colchester, the hiring or dismissal of our Assessor is governed by our town charter. Furthermore, the Board of Selectmen has enacted a policy to govern the hiring and dismissal of the Assessor and a union contract also adds further protection. Forcing Colchester and other towns to adhere to a "just cause" or "good cause" standard that is open for interpretation can be problematic as demonstrated with similar cases throughout the state.

The goal of making the position of Assessor as apolitical as possible is a worthwhile one. No Assessor should fear losing their job due to a change in administration or a demand to violate the statutes governing the assessment process. As you deliberate this bill, I only ask that you allow the municipalities to apply the same standard of employment to Assessors as they do to other employees.